

## A Concerned Kingston Resident- Lakeside

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Good Day,

I am a resident of Kingston and the profession I have chosen brought me here about three years ago. Living in this city up until mid-March has been an entirely pleasant experience. I would like to commend the members of the city council, public officials, and the mayor's office for the work they have done up until that point.

The events of the last few months have left me fearful, anxious and concerned about the direction we are going as a society and as a free country. After three and a half months of lock downs, social distancing, and stay at home orders I am quite debilitated.

I have been following the mask debate between the Ontario Civil Liberties Association and various Ontario municipal officials. I believe Mr. Hickey has sent out a reasonable request in his letter and one that should be addressed. I find it most troubling that the aggregate of responses by Kingston council member are dismissive and default to the judgement of health officials.

Instead of addressing any of the issues in the OCLA letter there was lockstep approval of the health authority order, criticizing the OCLA, accusing them of plagiarizing, and philosophical musings on the meaning of liberty. The lack of any debate on the issue speaks volumes and tells me something is not right with our system.

I am capable of looking into issues such as this and forming my own opinion. I am capable of critical thought and choosing sources of information wisely. This has taken some time. The reversals, contradictions, and hypocrisy on display in our political environment is evident to anyone with eyes who cares to look. The "overwhelming consensus of expert opinion" appears to be founded on a single research paper.

How long does this go on for? Is a mask wearing culture the one we really want to adopt? For a single person to wear a mask for twenty minutes when shopping is one thing but what are the long-term health effects of workers who are now inhaling their own off gases for hours a day, day after day? What are the mid to long-term psychological effects of constant mask wearing?

I have been largely apolitical to this point. However, this crisis has left me entirely disillusioned with the leadership at all levels of government. Civic administrators have, in concert with public health officials, responded to the issue of COVID 19 with an entirely fear based approach. Fear has been implanted, incubated, and harvested from every person in the community.

Understand that I write this letter with trepidation, but I think this is an important matter and it is my duty to express the concerns I have for the well-being of people in this community. I believe that psychological trauma has been inflicted on the public unnecessarily and I will never, ever, forget how this crisis was handled. I will continue to follow the issue and wait for true and inspired leadership from our elected officials.

Sincerely,

James Topp

Kingston, Ontario

[REDACTED]

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